

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L TAIPEI 1341

LIMDIS

DEPARTMENT FOR GLEYSTINE

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MILI, PEPR, TW, US
SUBJECT: FUTURE OF NAMRU II IN TAIPEI

1. CONTINUING REDUCTION IN U.S. MILITARY FORCES IN TAIWAN
AS WELL AS THE PROSPECT OF EVENTUAL TERMINATION OF US-ROC
DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS MAKE IT NECESSARY TO MAKE PLANS FOR THE
FUTURE FUNCTIONING OF THE U.S. NAVY MEDICAL RESEARCH UNIT
(NAMRU-II) IN TAIWAN, EITHER IN ITS PRESENT GUISE OR SOME
MODIFIED FORM. THERE IS A UNITED STATES INTEREST IN THE
CONTINUATION IN SOME FORM OF THE NAMRU ACTIVITY BECAUSE OF
THE IMPORTANT RESEARCH PERFORMED BY THAT UNIT, AND BECAUSE
OF THE VALUABLE US-TAIWAN RELATIONSHIP IT REPRESENTS.

2. NAMRU, DIRECTED BY U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL AND STAFFED
BY U.S. AND CHINESE TECHNICIANS, DOES A VARIETY OF RESEARCH
ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES IN THIS REGION INCLUDING STUDIES ON
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THE EPIDEMIOLOGY, ECOLOGY AND TREATMENT OF BACTERIAL, VIRAL
AND OTHER MICROORGANISM INFECTIONS. NAMRU HAS BEEN RECOGNIZED
FOR ITS ABILITY TO RESPOND TO OUTBREAKS OF DISEASES SUCH AS
CHOLERA IN THAILAND, PLAGUE IN INDONESIA, INTESTINAL CAPILLARIASIS
IN THE PHILIPPINES, A NEW STRAIN OF INFLUENZA BREAKING
OUT IN THE U.S. SEVENTH FLEET, ETC. IN ADDITION TO ITS LARGE
AND DIVERSIFIED LABORATORY ANIMAL COLONY, NAMRU DOES LAB AND

FIELD RESEARCH ON TAIWAN AND PROVIDES LABORATORY SUPPORT TO NAMRU II FIELD UNITS IN THE PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA. WE UNDERSTAND THAT, EXCEPT POSSIBLY FOR LABORATORIES IN JAPAN, THERE IS NO OTHER ORGANIZATION IN ASIA WITH AS HIGH A CONCENTRATION OF EXPERTISE AND SCIENTIFIC TALENT IN THE BIOMEDICAL FIELD.

3. NAMRU WAS ESTABLISHED BY US-ROC FORMAL AGREEMENT IN 1955 AND THE ARRANGEMENTS THUS ESTABLISHED WERE MOST RECENTLY EXTENDED ON OCTOBER 14, 1975 FOR AN ADDITIONAL THREE YEARS. BEFORE THIS COMING OCTOBER, THEREFOKE, A DECISION MUST BE REACHED ABOUT THE CONTINUATION OR THE LAPSING OF THAT AGREEMENT AND THIS OBVIOUSLY SHOULD BE DECIDED IN THE CONTEXT OF OUR LONGER-RUN PLANNING FOR NAMRU'S FUTURE IN ITS PRESENT OR IN SOME OTHER GUISE.

4. OVER RECENT YEARS THE U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL STAFFING NAMRU HAVE BEEN REDUCED IN NUMBER AND IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT FURTHER REDUCTIONS MAY TAKE PLACE IN THE COURSE OF THIS CALENDAR YEAR. LIKE THE OVER-ALL REDUCTIONS IN U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL ON TAIWAN, THIS IS IN CONSONANCE WITH THE EXPRESSIONS CONTAINED IN THE SHANGHAI COMMUNIQUE. IT IS ANTICIPATED, NEVERTHELESS, THAT A SMALL BUT SUFFICIENT NUMBER OF U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL COULD BE RETAINED AT NAMRU TO PERMIT ITS CONTINUED OPERATIONS IN GENERAL IN ITS PRESENT MODE AS LONG AS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS ARE MAINTAINED WITH THE CONFIDENTIAL

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ROC. EVEN IF IT WERE DECIDED TO REMOVE ALL U.S. MILITARY PRIOR TO NORMALIZATION, U.S. CIVILIAN MEDICAL OFFICIALS COULD CONTINUE TO PROVIDE LEADERSHIP FOR NAMRU.

5. THE NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND THE PRC AS NOW FORESEEN, HOWEVER, MIGHT WELL MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE FOR U.S. GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL TO OPERATE HERE. OTHER PROVISIONS FOR THE DIRECTION OF NAMRU WOULD HAVE TO BE MADE IF THE ORGANIZATION IS TO CONTINUED IN SOMETHING LIKE ITS PRESENT FORM. FURTHERMORE, IN THOSE CIRCUMSTANCES WE WILL DESIRE AS A MATTER OF POLICY TO DISTURB AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE ON-GOING AMERICAN-TAIWAN RELATIONS WHERE THIS IS NOT REQUIRED AS PART OF NORMALIZATION, AND NAMRU IS ONE OF THOSE LINKS, AND THE MOST IMPORTANT ONE IN THE MEDICAL FIELD. MOREOVER, THE RESEARCH DONE BY NAMRU IS OF CONSIDERABLE VALUE NOT ONLY INTAIWAN BUT ALSO IN EAST AND SOUTHEAST ASIA AND DIRECTLY TO THE UNITED STATES AND PROGRAMS IN THIS REGION IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS ENGAGED. THEREFORE, THE CONTINUATION OF THIS ACTIVITY EVEN IF NO LONGER OFFICIALLY LINKED WITH THE UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT WOULD BE VALUABLE TO US.

6. IN NUMBERS, NAMRU IS STAFFED PRIMARILY BY CHINESE PERSONNEL AND THERE WOULD BE NO NEED FOR THEIR STATUS OR FUNCTIONING TO BE DISTURBED. U.S. PERSONNEL, NOW ENTIRELY MILITARY, COULD IN THE FIRST PLACE BE REDUCED IN NUMBER AND IN THE ROLE THEY PLAY, THEIR FUNCTIONS IN SOME CONSIDERABLE PART BEING HANDED OVER TO COMPETENT CHINESE REPLACEMENTS. NEVERTHELESS, IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THIS LINK IN THE MEDICAL FIELD AS WELL AS TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE TECHNICAL LEADERSHIP IN NAMRU AND A MEANS OF PROVIDING ACCESS TO NAMRU'S PRODUCT FOR THE U.S. IN GENERAL AND SPECIFICALLY FOR THE NAMRU ESTABLISHMENT IN THE PHILIPPINES AND INDONESIA, IT WOULD BE DESIRABLE TO CONTINUE TO HAVE SOME AMERICAN PERSONNEL PARTICIPATING IN THE SUCCESSOR ORGANIZATION. SUCH PERSONNEL MIGHT WELL BE PROVIDED BY PRIVATE MEDICAL FOUNDATIONS OR BY CONFIDENTIAL

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AN AMERICAN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION SUCH AS THE UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON, WHICH NOW HAS A CLOSE WORKING RELATIONSHIP WITH NAMRU II. IN THIS WAY ALSO IT SHOULD BE POSSIBLE TO CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SOME FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM AMERICAN SOURCES (SOME OF IT POSSIBLY FROM U.S. GOVERNMENT FUNDS) ALTHOUGH THE GROUPOID WOULD VERY PROBABLY HAVE TO BEAR THE MAJOR FINANCIAL BURDEN.

7. I STRONGLY URGE THAT CONSIDERATION OF NAMRU'S FUTURE BE UNDERTAKEN AS A MATTER OF URGENCY SO THAT WHATEVER EVENTUATES ON TAIWAN AND WHENEVER IT COMES, THE CONTINUED OPERATION OF THIS VALUABLE MEDICAL ASSET IN WHATEVER GUISE NOT BE JEOPARDIZED. IT IS IN THE U.S. INTEREST ALSO THAT WHAT ORIGINATED AS NAMRU CONTINUE TO FUNCTION, EVEN IF WITHOUT U.S. OFFICIAL INVOLVEMENT, AS AN ON-GOING EXPRESSION OF TAIWAN-AMERICAN LINKS.
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